

Travilah

Introduction

This central and southern portion of the Potomac Subregion is a low-density area that acts as a transition from the higher densities of Potomac and North Potomac to lower densities in Darnestown and the natural environment of the Potomac River. This community is under intense development pressure and contains natural features of County and State significance. Travilah has one small commercially zoned area and is served by retail centers in the Subregion and beyond. These commercial areas beyond Travilah are expected to accommodate the shopping needs of the community.

Like Darnestown, Travilah is a more rural portion of the Subregion, and the area's dependence on septic systems has ensured low-density residential neighborhoods. According to the 1997 *Census Update Survey*, Travilah's population was 421 residents per square mile. Travilah's one commercial area is served by a septic system and there is no industrial zoning. The area is dominated by low-density, single-family detached residential development in the R-200, RE-1, RE-2, and RE-2C Zones.

Greenbriar Branch Watershed Sites

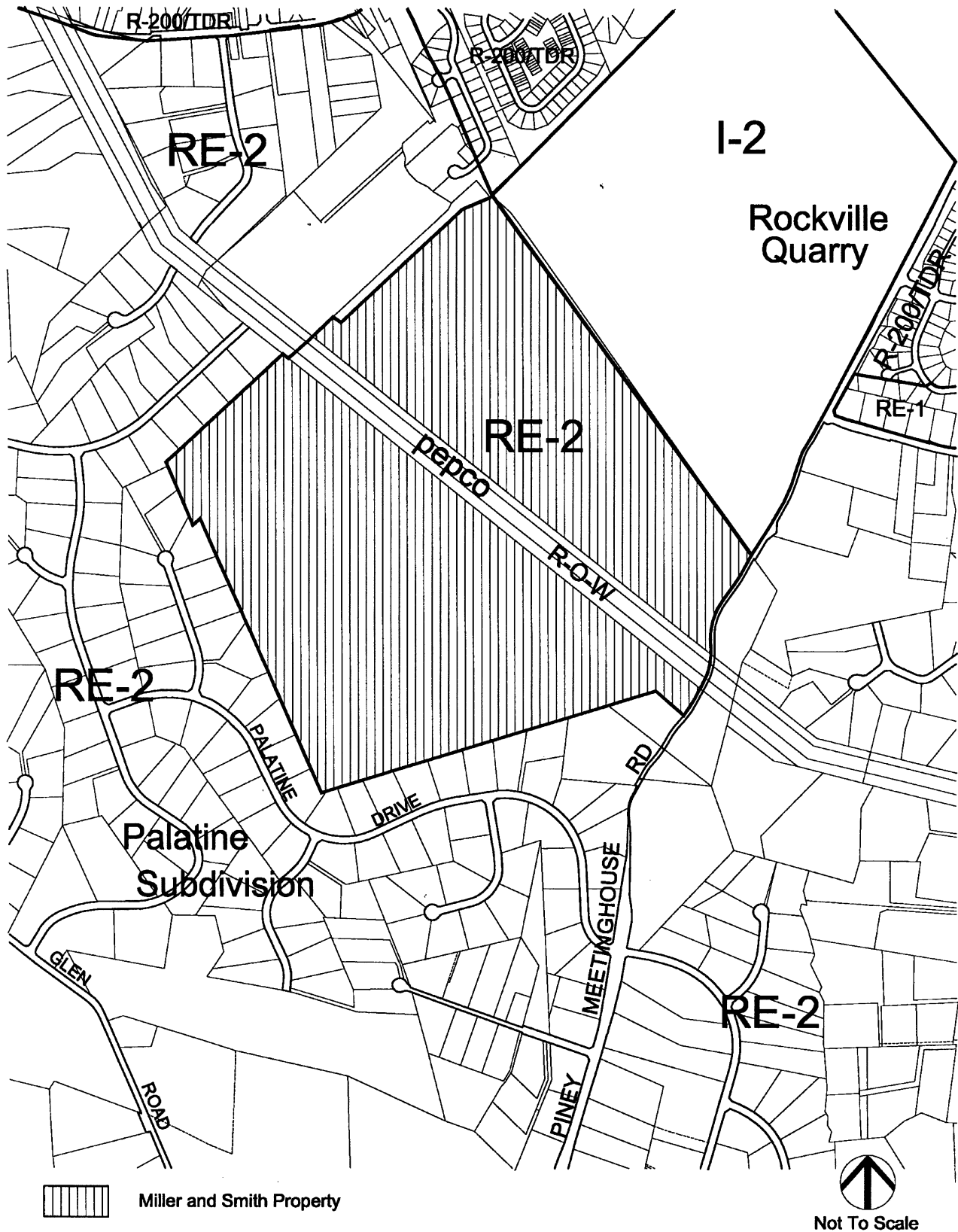
Within this watershed are two unprotected areas on serpentine bedrock that contain valuable, high quality, and sensitive natural resources, including habitats for rare, threatened, endangered, or watchlist species. (See Environmental Resources Plan.)

The first area is the 258-acre Miller and Smith property. The second area (145 acres) referred to as the Lower Greenbriar, includes four properties, Tipton, Piney Grove, Weihe, and Semmes. These properties have been identified by the Legacy Open Space Program as particularly important for acquisition, as there are no alternative properties of like quality and size anywhere else in the County.

These areas are of State, as well as County, significance and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has determined that preserving such areas will protect and enhance the biodiversity of the State of Maryland. The Miller and Smith property is zoned RE-2, is outside the sewer service envelope recommended by this Master Plan, and is currently under intense development pressure. Without expeditious action by the Planning Board and County Council, much of the unique, second generation climax forest vegetation on this property will be lost forever.

Miller and Smith Property

This 258-acre site is located west of Piney Meetinghouse Road and is zoned RE-2. (See Map 16.) It is bisected by the Pepco right-of-way (250 feet wide, 4,135 feet long and approximately 23.7 acres) and shares the same unique geological formation as the Rockville Crushed Stone Quarry to the north and the Palatine subdivision to the south. To the east is Piney Meetinghouse Road and the Piney Glen Farms and Glen Knolls subdivisions, both zoned RE-2.



This property, also known as the Travilah Serpentine Area, is a rare natural community located on a large outcrop covered by thin nutrient-poor and chemically unusual soil. Considered the State's rarest natural community type, the Miller and Smith property is one of four serpentinite-influenced sites remaining in Maryland. It is the second largest of these sites, and supports seven state-listed threatened or endangered species together with 13 watchlist species adapted to the prevalent harsh condition. (See Table 1, page 15). See also page 17 under the heading "Greenbriar Branch Watershed".

The property owners have proposed a residential development and request RE-2C zoning. A clustered single-family housing development of 103 units is proposed within three development pods totaling approximately 90 acres. Also proposed are two entrances off Piney Meetinghouse Road with internal roads and sewer lines connecting the three development pods. The plan was designed to economically support the conservation park on the remainder of the property (130 acres). It would be developed as a conservation park with a series of natural, interpretive trails and entirely funded by the private sector. The property owners propose to provide public water and sewer to this property.

This Plan has three main disadvantages: it would constitute an intrusion beyond the sewer service envelope boundary proposed by this Master Plan; it would fragment further the viability of the island remnants of serpentinite and their rare and unusual ecosystems; and it would require excavating new sewer lines along stream valleys, with concomitant environmental damage.

These properties have been recommended for acquisition by the Legacy Open Space Program. The Miller and Smith property is also identified as a priority for acquisition by the Park Acquisition Program. This Master Plan endorses these recommendations.

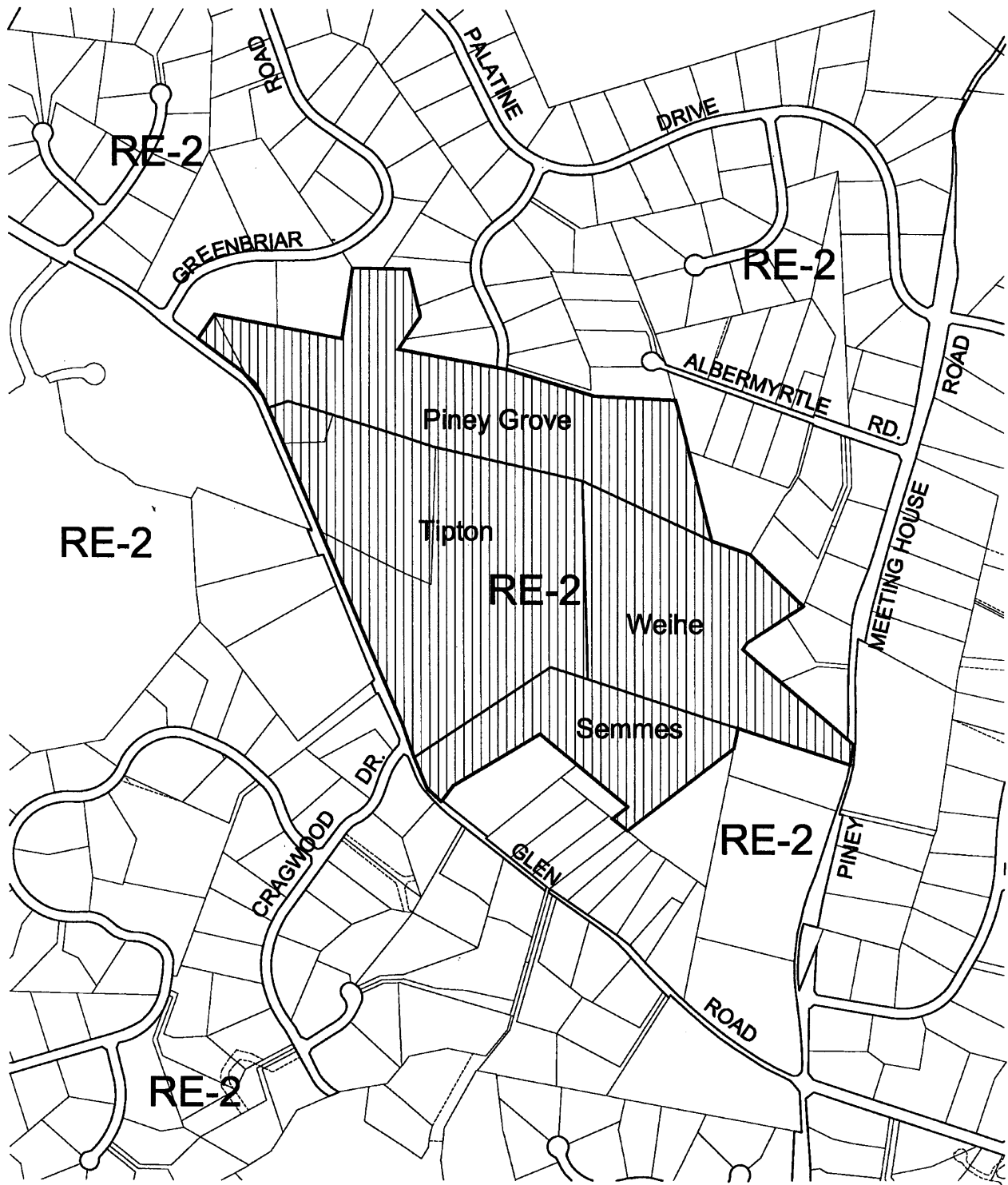
Recommendations

- **Retain the existing RE-2 zoning.**
- **Acquire the properties as conservation park land, if possible during the first budget cycle after Master Plan adoption.**
- **Do not include properties within the sewer service envelope.**

Tipton Property, Piney Grove, Weihe and Semmes

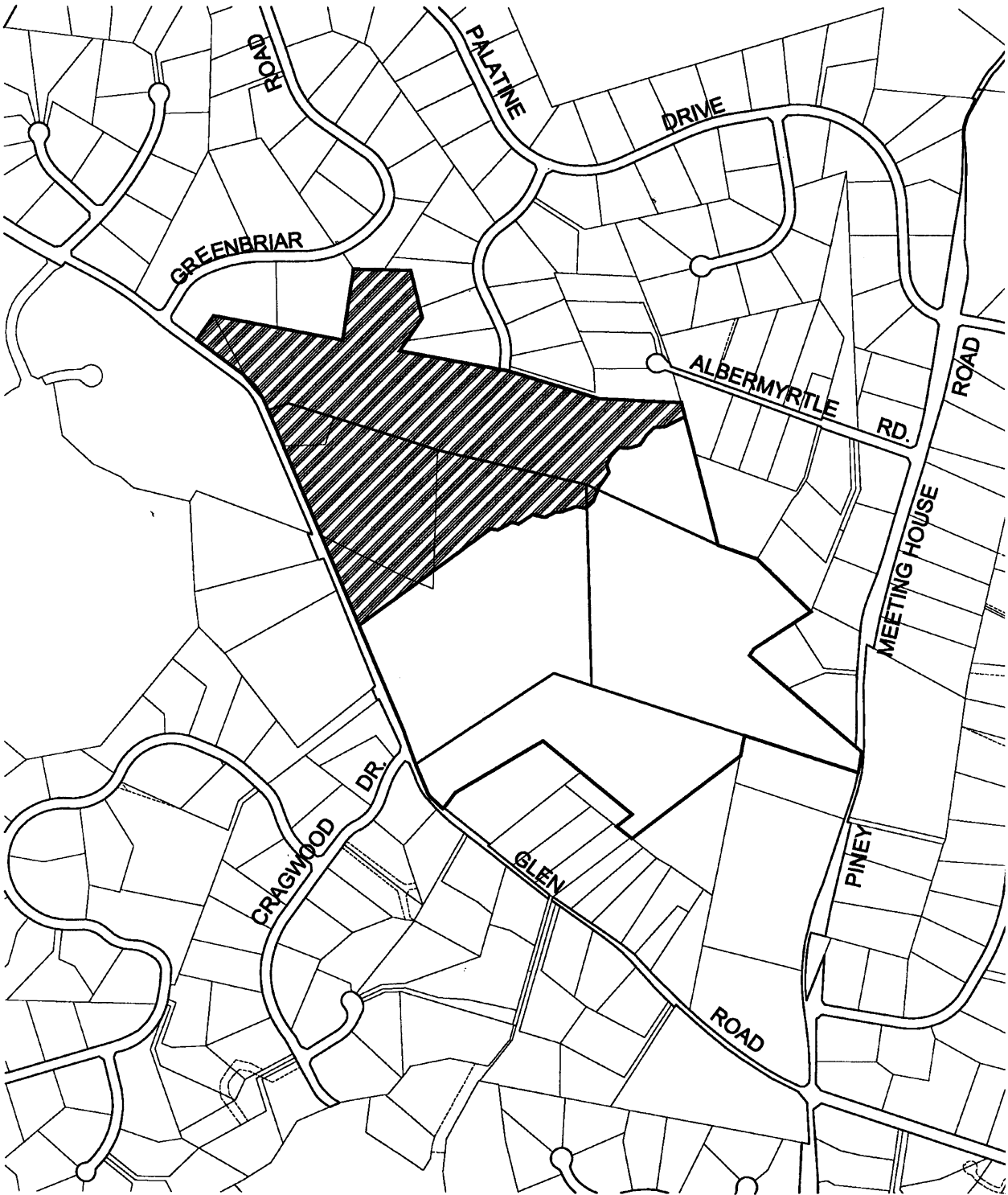
The Tipton Property on the northeast side of Glen Road contains 51.83 acres. (See Map 14.) It has been owned by the Tipton Family since 1946. The properties to the north (Palatine) and south (Great Elm Farm) are served by public sewer. Applications for sewer services have been filed since 1989, but each has been deferred (or denied) for various reasons. The property is traversed by a major underground pipeline right-of-way which is devoid of trees and crosses the existing small streams.

The three other parcels are also zoned RE-2 and total approximately 93.0 acres. (See Map 17.) Piney Grove is located between the Palatine subdivision and the Tipton property. The Weihe parcel abuts the east boundary of the Tipton property. Taken together, Piney Grove and Weihe have access to Piney Meetinghouse Road to the east and Glen Road to the west.



 Lower Greenbriar Properties


Not To Scale



 Park Dedication


Not To Scale

The property owners have requested that these properties be designated for Rural Neighborhood Cluster (RNC) under the optional method. Under such a designation, the owners have proposed a cluster development of 62 single-family detached homes and preservation of approximately 44 acres (65 percent of the property) as a Greenbriar Stream Valley Park.

Recommendations

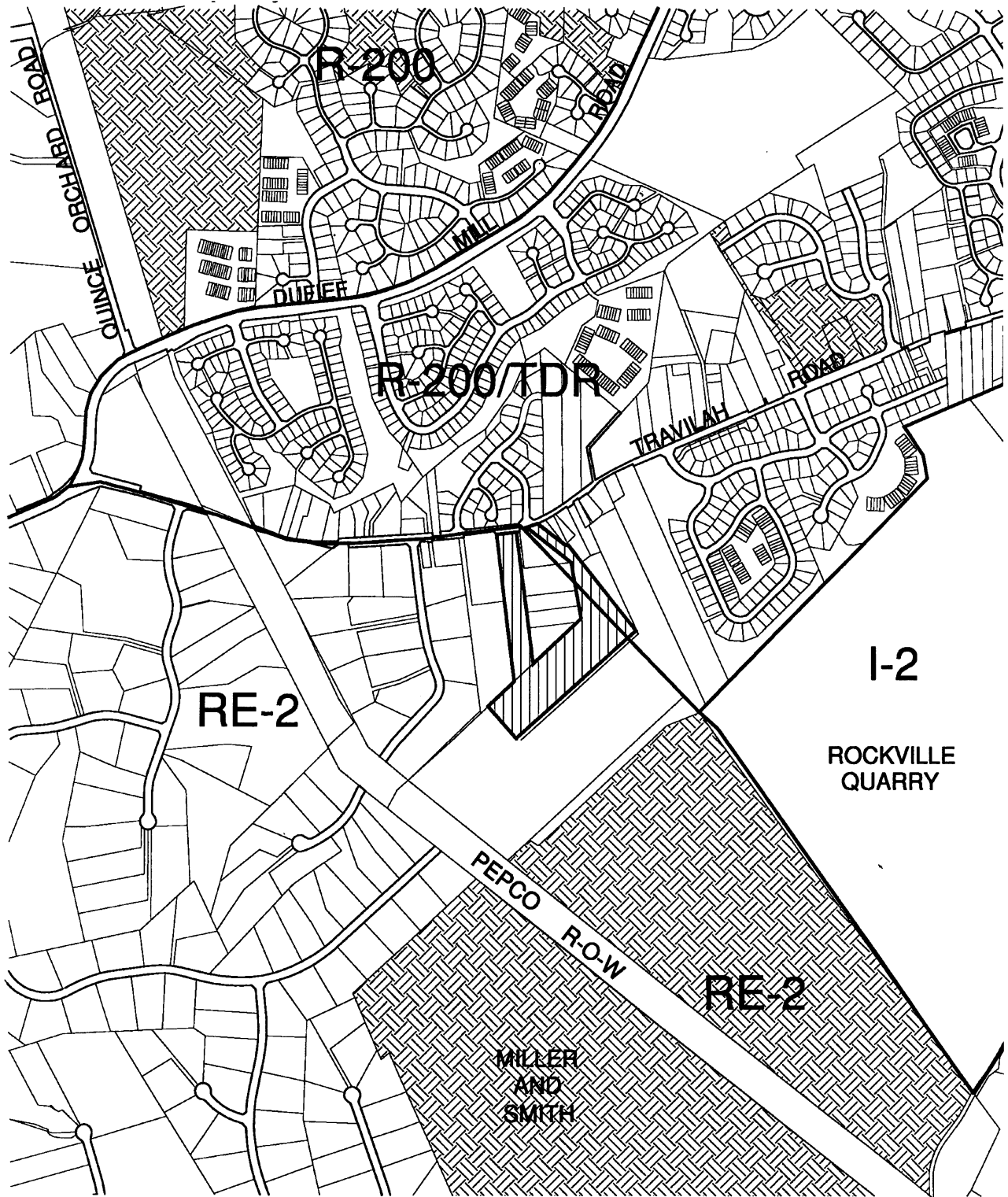
Rezone these properties RNC with the provision of public water and sewer service with the following conditions:



- **The properties must be subject to a single development application, or in the alternative, two applications, each of which must include at least 40 percent of the housing units and 40 percent of the dedicated open space.**
- **Dedicate as park land the 60 acres west of the gas line easement and west of the northern most tributary east of the gas line easement.**
- **Provide sewer service via pressure system rather than by gravity.**
- **The design and implementation of the pressurized waste water system serving these properties must meet the standards and satisfaction of staff in the WSSC's Engineering and Construction Team.**
- **Retain 70 percent open space. Stream buffers should be maximized (providing larger than minimum buffers wherever feasible) through dedication or the use of private conservation easements.**
- **Maximum of 62 lots (based on compatibility and sewer feasibility).**

Johnson Property

This 13.8-acre site is located on Travilah Road near the dividing line between the North Potomac and Travilah communities. The "Johnson property" is actually two parcels: a 3.45-acre rectangular property and a 10.38-acre irregularly shaped parcel. Both parcels have access to Travilah Road. In the center of the two U-shaped Johnson parcels are five other parcels owned by three different groups. Most of the property is zoned RE-2 with a small portion (approximately ten percent) zoned R-200/TDR. The owner has requested a zoning change to R-200 or RE-2/TDR2 and extension of public sewer service. (See Map 19.)

The Johnson property has existing community water and sewer service for one hook-up. The property is adjacent to the proposed sewer service boundary, but is not included within the proposed sewer envelope. Much of the site is currently used for business operations that are allowed by several special exceptions. The site contains several buildings, large dump trucks, large gravel surfaces, trailers, storage containers, as well as abandoned vehicles, tires, and old equipment.



-  Johnson Property
-  Existing or Proposed Park



Not To Scale

Residential land use would be more compatible with the surrounding area than the current uses. Rezoning of this property could substantially upgrade the area, enable assemblage of unrecorded parcels, and eliminate commercial special exceptions and nonconforming uses in the area.

However, while residential development is encouraged, increasing the zoning density for this site would be contrary to several of the stated policies in the Public Hearing Draft Potomac Subregion Master Plan. For example, the County's water and sewer policies generally allow the provision of sewer service only to those areas zoned for moderate to dense development. The Plan establishes a policy that generally recommends against the provision of community sewer service to low-density areas, such as those with RE-2 zoning.

It is not recommend that community sewer service be extended outside of the proposed sewer envelope. While the Plan does support limited approvals for sewer service along its currently established edge, the focus of any such limited service is on properties that can be served by sewer extensions within public rights-of-way. The Johnson property could not be served by sewer extensions within the public right-of-way.

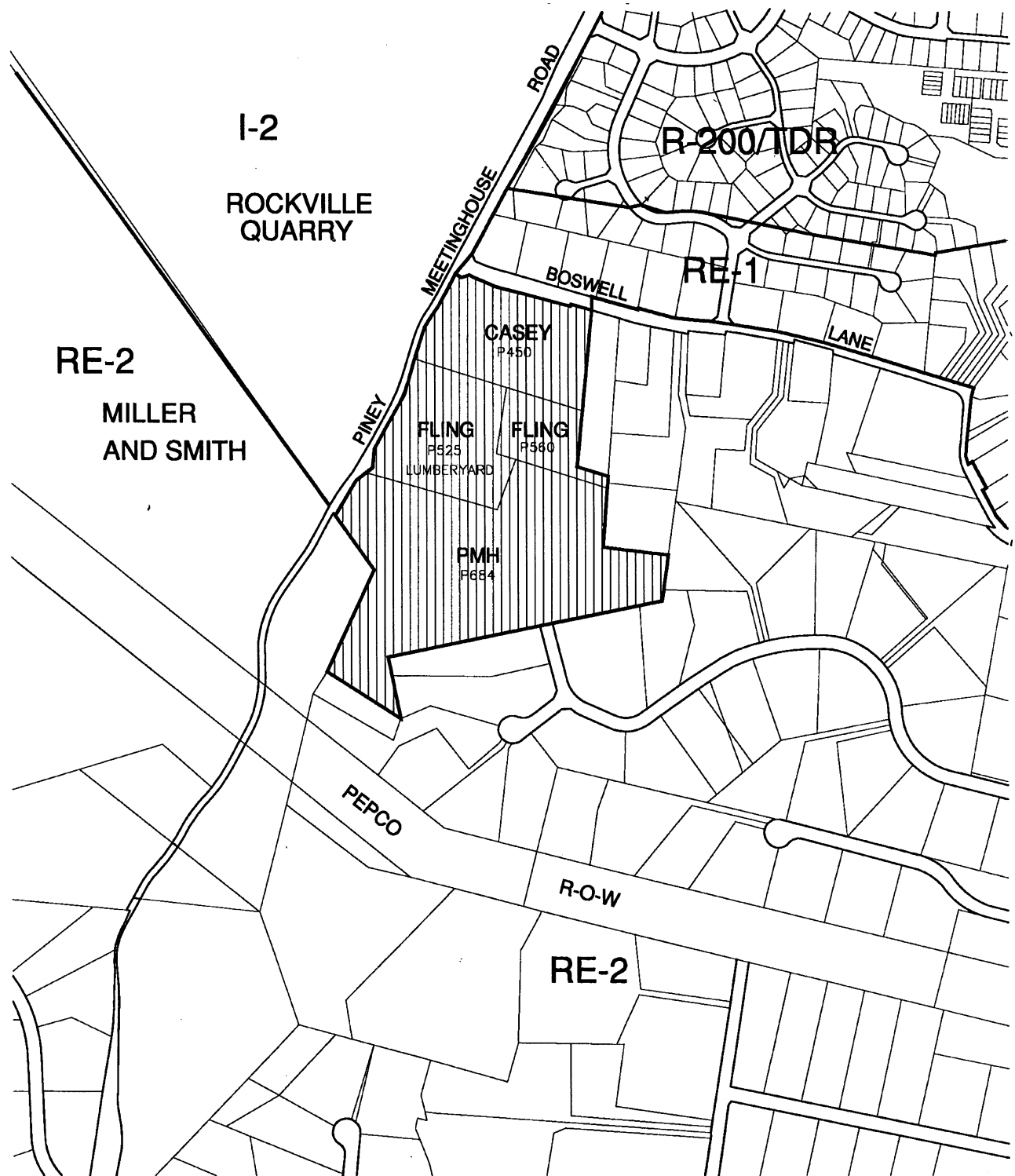
Recommendations

- **Confirm the existing zoning of RE-2 that covers 90 percent of the site.**
- **Correct a zoning anomaly (i.e., the split zoning) that exists on the site by rezoning the R-200\TDR-3 portion (approximately 10 percent) of the property to RE-2.**

PMH Joint Venture, Fling, and Casey Properties

These RE-2 zoned properties are located at the southeast quadrant of Piney Meetinghouse Road and Boswell Lane, confronting the I-2 zoned Rockville Crushed Stone Quarry on the west and the RE-1 zoned land north of Boswell Lane. The Casey property (Parcel 450) covers 6.84 acres, while the Fling properties (Parcels 525 and 560) are 6.39 and 2.59 acres respectively. The largest parcel (P684) covers 19.89 acres and is owned by PMH Joint Venture. Parcel 525 is a commercial lumberyard that is bereft of vegetation, has spilled over into the adjacent PMH property and into Parcel 560, and has mulch piles that are leaching into adjacent stream waters. The owners of Parcels 525, 560, and 684 have presented a joint request for the RE-2C Zone and an amendment to the sewer service envelope. (See Map 20.)

The subject parcels are located in the western tributary of the Piney Branch watershed and restricted from access to community sewer service due to the County Council's Restricted Access policy for Piney Branch watershed. The PMH parcel is bisected by the West Piney Branch and almost entirely forested. The parcels are located on the eastern edge of the serpentinite outcrop and are unlikely to support more than two or three conventional septic systems due to shallow bedrock and a high water table.



PMH Joint Venture, Fling, and Casey Properties



Not To Scale



 Proposed conservation Area


Not To Scale

There does not appear to be any method of permitting a sewer extension to these properties with a standard RE-2 subdivision without setting a precedent that would essentially nullify the County Council's Restricted Access Policy for the other developable properties within this sub-basin. The County's water and sewer policies generally allow the provision of sewer service only to those areas zoned for moderate to dense development. The Plan establishes a policy that generally recommends against the provision of community sewer service to low-density areas, such as those with RE-2 zoning.

Environmentally, the lumberyard is a degraded site. Sustaining the environment is the pre-eminent policy determinant of the Draft Plan, and the following is proposed as the sole exception to the West Piney Branch Restricted Access Policy to achieve a net environmental gain for this area:

1. A small residential cluster development eliminating a very degraded commercial site of around seven acres.
2. Preservation through a Conservation Easement of approximately 22 acres of riparian forest with rare plants.
3. An improvement to water quality.

Recommendations

Rezone the PMH Joint Venture, Fling, and Casey properties (Parcels 684, 525, 560, and 450) to the RE-2C Zone with the following conditions:

1. **A single combined application for the PMH and Fling properties with all lots limited to lumberyard parcel (6.39 acres) and disturbed edge of Parcels 684 and 560.**
2. **Remaining area of approximately 22 acres to be a Category A Conservation Easement to protect water quality and rare plants. (See Map 21.)**
3. **Planning Board waiver of 50-acre minimum tract for RE-2C Zone only if all conditions are met.**
4. **WSSC approval of pressure sewer feasibility. Pumping to be to Piney Meetinghouse Road and north to Boswell Lane.**
5. **Public sewer service will require use of cluster option as recommended in the Master Plan.**
6. **Cluster development on Casey property will only be considered subsequent to Planning Board approval of PMH/Fling cluster. In the alternative, a joint application for all four parcels, meeting all above conditions, may be made. In either case, a significant proportion of riparian forest on the Casey property will be required as a Category A Conservation Easement.**

Reiver Property

This two acre site, zoned RE-2, is located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Travilah and Glen Roads. The property is surrounded on three sides by the single-family detached houses of the Belvedere, Travilah Park, and Greenbriar Estates subdivisions, is zoned RE-2, and retains a single-family detached residential character. A small commercial convenience center is located diagonally across the intersection from this site. The owner has requested O-M zoning, with a schematic development plan, arguing the need for small office in the area, and that the proximity of the existing structure to the Glen and Travilah rights-of-way limits its use for residential purposes.

Even on well and septic, and with the safeguards of a schematic development plan, this site is not appropriate for office use. Such a change would constitute an undesirable precedent in the RE-2 Zone.

Recommendation

- **Retain the existing RE-2 zoning, but allow appropriate special exception uses.**

Tobytown

The Tobytown community is bounded by River Road and Pennyfield Lock Road, approximately five miles west of Potomac Village (See Map 22.) The Tobytown Cemetery, which contains the remains of its founders, is the last original site remaining in the community. The Tobytown Cemetery is a master planned historic site, #25/014, and is described in Appendix C.

Tobytown was established in 1875 by William Davis, Ailsie Martin, and Emory Genus. The community's first residents were former slaves. With the exception of one two-story house, all the original fifteen houses were one-story houses with one, two, and three bedrooms. The community had no post office or school (Montgomery County denied residents' request to construct a school in 1917) and classes were held in the Baptist Church.

The community prospered as most residents worked on surrounding farms as laborers, gardeners, domestics, and cooks. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, demand for rural labor declined as the area developed with exclusive residences. With limited job and educational opportunities, Tobytown began to suffer; most of the seventy-five residents lacked indoor plumbing and electricity and had no garbage collection.

In 1965, the County health department issued an order to improve sanitation conditions, including wells and outhouses. The County Council designated Tobytown as an urban renewal area in 1967 and directed the Housing Authority to establish a nonprofit development corporation. Thus, the Tobytown Development Corporation, consisting of residents, interested citizens, and government staff, was appointed.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the development corporation's housing plan in January 1972 and new townhouses were occupied by December 1972. Today, Tobytown has approximately 125 residents in 26 townhouses on 16 acres of land. These residents have a marked sense of pride and community. However, with no public transportation in the vicinity,

they also feel isolated from jobs and retail centers. This Master Plan supports paratransit, possibly a minivan supplied by the Department of Recreation, for the citizens of Tobytown, to address an immediate need.

Recommendation

- **Support a study of paratransit options for Tobytown as a priority. (See Transportation Plan.)**

